NAQCC News

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1. JULY SPRINT: Our 81st regular 2-hour sprint is this coming Wednesday evening, July 20 at 8:30P EDT, 7:30P CDT, 6:30P MDT, 5:30P PDT which in all cases convert to Thursday from 0030Z to 0230Z. The last 15 sprints have had over 100 logs submitted, and we hope to extend that to 16 this month.

Being low-key, slow paced sprints, ours are an excellent testing ground for newcomers. Even the many veteran contesters/sprinters who enter will slow down (QRS) for you if you ask.

We have a prize of WB8LZG's paddle handles and knobs thanks to another generous donation of the handsome hand-crafted items by Gregg. Thanks Gregg. They go to the winner of a random drawing among all MEMBERS who participate in and submit a log for our sprint each month. Previous winners are not eligible. Take a look at the Prize page in the main section of the web site to see what they look like if you don't already know.

With the popularity of our sprints it is becoming necessary to spread out our activity a bit more than the frequencies listed in the rules. That's perfectly OK, but don't stray overly far or you may not be found. Also avoid other scheduled activities when you do so - other contests/sprints, nets, code practice, etc.

Remember to be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

2. JUNE CHALLENGE RESULTS: We had two challenges in June as we do each year - our regular challenge of some kind and our FD challenge. Both were well attended this year as

usual. We had 7 participants in the Poker challenge and 8 in the Field Day challenge.

I believe we set the bar too high for the Poker challenge though. No one mastered the full challenge requirement of 20 points, and no certificates were awarded, but of course all got a participation point towards the Participation award and a chance at a free one-year FISTS membership.

Probably next year we'll lower the requirement for a certificate to around 10 points. I think that only using non-contest QSO's in our challenges which we started this year was a factor in no one making the 20 points.

The FD challenge was interesting this year as 10 meters was wide open. John K3WWP worked 31 states on that band from next-door states all the way out to the west coast. He also worked a couple states on 6 meters. Hopefully that's a sign of things to come for those two fun bands.

Full Challenge info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- The Friendship Club tutorial mentioned in the past couple newsletters is now up and running on the web site via a link in the Friendship Club rules page. We hope it leads to an increase in FC numbers. It makes the job of checking for member QSO's and applying for the award as easy as the proverbial 'falling off a log'. All you need to do is to enter the calls of stations you've worked into GenLog and it does the rest including telling you if the station is a member, whether it is a duplicate, allows you to enter the point value for the QSO, and when you're done provides a file that you can submit as your award application. All you need to do is check the file to be sure you have the required number of QSO's and/or points. I don't know how it can be made any easier. If the work involved has been an excuse for not applying for the award, that excuse is no longer valid. So come on and increase the FC award numbers by leaps and bounds.

- The NAQCC portable operations team shown below had their best outing so far back on July 3rd at the Kittanning Community Park. Don K3RLL, Mike KC2EGL, and John K3WWP racked up 28 QSO's using the club call of N3AQC. The QSO's were spread among 20, 30, and 40 meters. Three corners of the USA were covered as QSO's were made with Maine, Florida, and Washington.

Everything went smoothly for the operation. Setting up the antennas was easy and quick. Once set up, we ran into good conditions on the bands. There was some QRN from some storms in the area, but other than that, the park is pretty much free from any local man-made QRN unlike at John's location down in Kittanning itself which is a hotbed of man-made QRN.

We did have one little glitch when Mike's KX-1 which John was using suddenly stopped transmitting and showed a power output of 0.0 watts and an SWR of 9.9:1. After some checking with a multimeter and switching the rig to another antenna, we determined the trouble must be with the antenna or feedline since it worked well with the other antenna. We think the trouble was with a coax coupler that connected two sections of coax together K8iDn to make a long enough lead for more separation of the antennas. It was an old unit and perhaps the contact points were dirty. Anyway after we disconnected and reconnected it, everything was fine again. So it was either the coupler or just some gremlins having fun.

With all three of us working on the problem, that pause in the operation seemed to kill our momentum though, and we didn't make any more QSO's after that. Fortunately it came somewhat late in our operation after our earlier success.

Here you can see the shelter we operated from and one of the three antennas used. The antennas were inverted vees designed by Don with Mike and John making their own versions of Don's design. What you see here is the PVC mast which is broken down into 4 3-foot sections for portability. It fits over a dowel driven into the ground and is steadied by three guy wires if necessary in windy conditions. It's hard to see the antenna itself in the picture as it is green wire against the green trees in the background.

I think this is a great picture of our beautiful NAQCC hats. Do you have yours yet. If not, you should get one and proudly show off your NAQCC membership whenever you attend any type of ham radio activity. Here is more info about how you can purchase yours.

- One of our members Richard K4KRW was kind and thoughful enough to do the following as he emailed, "Greetings, I noticed that the North American QRP CW Club link in the QRP Operation article on Wikipedia was out of date. So, I fixed it. 73, Richard K4KRW."

Thank you very much Richard. Should you happen to run across a web site that has one of our old URL's in their link, please let the webmaster know about it if possible. Remember our current URL is http://naqcc.info/.

- Another member K6XT took care of a chore we perhaps should have done sooner. That is to explain the importance of learning and using UTC or Z time in everything dealing with ham radio. Read his item in the member news section below.

- Here's a list of those who've signed up to help us out with our October anniversary celebration by using one of our 10 N#A special event calls the week of Monday October 10 through Sunday October 16. If you don't see your call there, why not? All those who've operated our SE calls through the years have enjoyed it tremendously as well as helping to publicize the club. You don't need to make a firm commitment right now, but let us know if you're interested. You can always back out later if you should unfortunately become ill or have other more pressing things come up for that week. As you see from the list, we have no one expressing interest yet from a couple call areas. We want to have all 10 call areas be very active, so if

you're in one of those call areas with no one listed or an area with just one person listed, come on and sign up. No matter how many we have from a call area, there is always room for one more, also. Remember time is drawing near with just under 3 months that will go by very quickly before the event.

N1A - N1DN
N2A - WB2VEN NW2K
N3A - K3WWP WY3H KC2EGL N3ES AF3Z
N4A - K2UFT KI4EBD
N5A - W5YDM K5JYD
N6A
N7A - WD8KRV
N8A - N8XMS N8IUP
N9A - AB9JT
N0A - KC0PMH N0TU K0HJC KD0V WD0K

That's a total of 21 operators so far. I'm sure there are others out there who will sign up. I hope you will do so as soon as possible so we can do some more active recruiting for any call areas that need it.

Perhaps you did offer to help and are not listed. If so, then your offer was derailed somewhere along the email tracks. Please tell us again.

The guidelines are very simple. All you do is operate normally, but use the special event call instead of your own. Period. Put in whatever amount of time you can from 1 hour up to the full 168 hours, although I wouldn't advise that. HI The human body does need its rest. Each of the ten call areas from W1 through W0 has its own special event call as noted above. The operators in a call area co-ordinate their on-air times among themselves.

Sound interesting? Contact us via email at **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** and let us know.

Remember conditions should be the best they have been for any of our previous anniversary celebrations with the Sun finally coming alive this year. It should be a real bang-up celebration. Don't you want to be a part of it?

- Just a quick reminder we're continuing with the hidden call sign idea originally suggested by Bill KB3XS. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member in a place that is definitely out of context and containing a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (Jul 30) and win a gift certificate for 100 NAQCC QSL cards produced by the CheapQSLs.com company run by Hal K6RF (#0171) and donated by the NAQCC thanks to your generous monetary donations to the club.

3a. CHAPTER NEWS:

Here is where our club chapters present news about their chapter activities. We currently have three chapters - European, Minnesota, and Texas. We're looking forward to expanding that roster. Chapters are more or less independent local gatherings organized by members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines under the auspices of the NAQCC. If you would be interested in starting a chapter in your area, let us know and we'll send a copy of the guidelines.

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER:

pix_sm_mw3ymy (13K)

Items in this section are from EU Chapter President Matt MW3YMY unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **MATT@MATTIRELAND.CO.UK**
The EU Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcc-eu.org/

As the chapter approaches its first anniversary, the primary activities and services continue including monthly sprints, the chapter newsletter and the website.

Unfortunately, sprint participation has been decreasing since March to the extent that we only had a total of six logs submitted over the last two months, despite increased publicity. The next sprint is to be held on Wednesday 10 th August at 1800-2000UTC. Please join us to try and make the sprints a big success again. Everyone is invited to take part, not just those in Europe, so please try and be on the air to make some QRP DX QSOs.

On a slightly more positive note, there seems to be considerable interest in setting up an NAQCC net in Europe. Since launching a survey to determine whether members would be interested in a net and what type of net they would like, we have had 32 responses, 90% of which said they would like a weekly net in Europe. We hope to work with the net manager in the near future to set up such a net.

Until next time, 72 es gd DX. Hope to catch you out on the bands.

NAQCC MINNESOTA CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from Chapter President Rich WD0K (L) and/or Keith K0HJC (R) unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to pix_email_wd0k .
The Minnesota Chapter web site is at http://www.naqccmn.com/

Greetings from the Minnesota Chapter!

Greetings from the Minnesota Chapter! The Milliwatt Sprint produced an interesting result. AA4W managed to work every Minnesota station that submitted a log. Our usual Minnesota Sprint thunderstorm forced everyone up on 20 meters, where Rick was waiting!

We are still looking for responses to our request for input regarding interests and possible activities. If you have an activity that intrigues or interests you, please let us know. Please feel welcome to join us for Brunch and/or rag-chew, or send me an E-mail at k0hjc@arrl.net.

Our next brunch is Friday, July 22nd. Please check the Minnesota website for location. Sideband rag-chew is still at 1400 GMT on 3.707 Mhz. Visit our Minnesota Chapter Website at http://www.naqccmn.com/ for more details.

NAQCC TEXAS CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from TX Chapter Director Ron K5DUZ unless otherwise credited.

Questions or comments should go to **WEBMASTER7388@NAQCCTX.COM**
The TX Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcctx.com/

The East Texas QRS Net (ETN) is meeting each Monday evening at 1900 CDST (2400 UTC) on 7121 KHz. Note the move to 40m. The T-storm QRN on 80m just got to be too much for Allen's ears to bear. The net will move up as much as three KHz in the event of QRM on 7121 KHz.

Watch for the next NAQCC Net e-mail for the latest information.

The ETN is open to all hams regardless of QTH, so check in for a little CW practice or to show your support for the net. The Net Control Station (NCS) is Allen, KA5TJS. He will reply to you at the speed you call him, so don't be put off by stations sending faster than you can comfortably receive. You will be among friends, so give it a try!

You can find the NAQCC Texas Chapter website at http://www.naqcctx.com/.

4. NAQCC CW ASSISTANCE PROJECT:

Items in this section are from CW Assistance Project Coordinator Ron K5DUZ (L) unless otherwise credited.
If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**

Ron has become involved in another work project and will be unavailable to write info for this section for a while. If you would like to write something that you feel will be helpful to our members in learning CW or improving CW skills, please feel free to do so.

4a. NAQCC QRS NETS:

News and net reports in this section are from QRS Net Manager Dan AF4LB unless otherwise credited.
Dan will handle all Net related material at this email address:
pix email af4lb

Attention all QRS NET lovers! The NQN NET on August 14th, and the ECN NET on August 18th will be held from a different location. I am going portable at an elevation of about 800 feet in the mountains of western Virginia. I will still be using my K2 but my antenna will be a random verticle wire in the trees and not my g5rv. I look forward to hearing my regulars as well as making some new friends. See you there! 73 Dan af4lb

Now our NAQCC QRS Nets schedule and activity report:

NAQCC QRS Net

Sunday evenings local time which is Monday 0000Z on 7041 kHz.

Date(UTC)	NCS		Participants						
6/27/2011	AF4LB	-11-	AF4LB	WB3T	K3RLL	K9OHI	N8IUP	K1IEE	W4CUX
			KU4GW	KF2TP	N9RLO	K3WWP			
7/4/2011	AF4LB	-13-	AF4LB	W4ISI	KD8GZ	W8BI	N4JD	K1IEE	N8CX
			KC9PRJ	K3HPS	K3WWP	KD8FKD	N2YHQ	SM6DLY	
7/11/2011	AF4LB	-10-	AF4LB	N8IUP	K3RLL	KB9BVN	K1IEE	N9RLO	
			KU4GW	KC9UUZ	KA2SDD	W8TAF			

NAQCC ET QRS Net (East Texas)

Monday evenings local time, which is Tuesday 0000Z on 7121 kHz.

Date(UTC)	NCS		Participants		
6/28/2011	KA5TJS	-2-	KA5TJS	KE5YGA	
7/5/2011	NO CONTACTS				
7/13/2011	KA5TJS	-3-	KA5TJS	W5IQS	KE5YGA

NAQCC EC QRS Net (East Coast)

Thursday evenings local time which is Friday 0130Z on 7041 kHz.

Date(UTC)	NCS		Participants			
7/1/2011	AF4LB	-4-	AF4LB	WX4RM	W4ISI	W4CUX
7/8/2011	AF4LB	-4-	AF4LB	N4JD	W5ISI	WX4RM

NAQCC PNW QRS Net (Pacific NorthWest)

Thursday evenings local time which is Friday 0200Z on 3574 kHz.

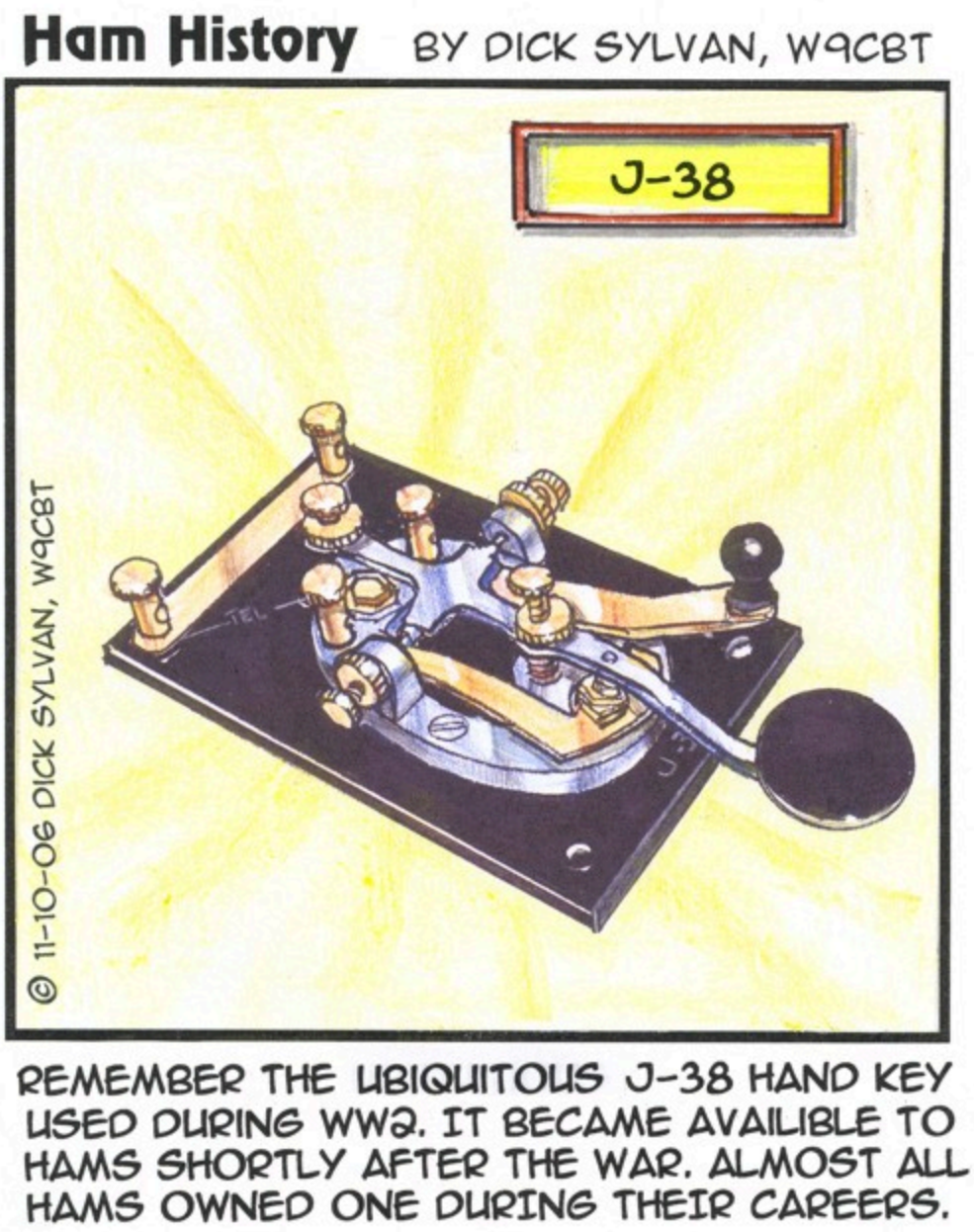
Date(UTC)	NCS		Participants		
07/01/11	KE7LKW	-2-	K7ALG	KE7LKW	
07/08/11	KE7LKW	-2-	K7ALG	KE7LKW	
07/15/11	KE7LKW	-3-	K7ALG	KE7LKW	K7ZNP

All frequencies are +/- QRM.

For more net info, see CW Assistance/QRS Nets on the web site.

5. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH:

Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT NAQCC #2062. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in the K9YA Telegraph, a free ham radio eZine, where he is staff cartoonist. The NAQCC is very honored to reprint Dick's cartoons originally published in the K9YA Telegraph. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon has appeared in each of our even-numbered newsletters ever since their debut in Issue #058, November 17, 2007.


Ham History BY DICK SYLVAN, W9CBT
J-38
© 11-10-06 DICK SYLVAN, W9CBT
REMEMBER THE UBIQUITOUS J-38 HAND KEY USED DURING WW2. IT BECAME AVAILIBLE TO HAMS SHORTLY AFTER THE WAR. ALMOST ALL HAMS OWNED ONE DURING THEIR CAREERS.

QRP QRP

6. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to PAUL142857@GMAIL.COM. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

John Becton AD5WO #4647

I am married to a beautiful lady who encourages me in my ham hobby. I have 1 daughter, 4 Grand Children, and 2 Great-Grand children (and another on the way), all live in my home state of Florida.

I have held a GROL since the early 80's, but have been a licensed ham radio operator only since Feb. 2005. I spent one year as a technician, then upgraded to extra. I enjoy operating 2 meter FM, 20 and 17-meter phone, CW, 75 meter rag-chew, and psk-31.

Home-brewing radio stuff also interests me. So far I have built several antennas, a psk-31 interface, a QRP CW transceiver, a noise filter, a level converter, and a keyer.

My station currently consist of ICOM IC-735, ICOM IC-V8000, Kenwood TS-820s, Yaesu FT-2800 transceivers, an ICOM 6 meter transceiver, 2 MFJ-949E tuners, a B&W filter, a salvaged e-machines desktop, a Bencher dual paddle key, and the home-brew stuff I mentioned. My antennas are several wire antennas, a 13 element Yagi for 2 meters, a 7 element Yagi for 440 mhz, and a Hustler 5 BTV Vertical modified for 17 meters. The primary antenna is a full wave 160 meter horizon loop, fed with 450 ohm ladder line through a 4:1 home-brew balun, this is my most dependable antenna. Using it, I check into the Mississippi Magnolia Each morning with 100 watts on 3.878 mhz and can always be heard, not bad for an antenna made from scrap wire.

I am the ARRL EC for Henderson County TX, a RACES operator, and a volunteer examiner.

Other hobbies include gardening, fishing, and golf. I also volunteer at a non-profit low cost spay and neuter clinic, and the East Texas Arboretum and Botanical Society. www.eastexasarboretum.org/

7. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS:

This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is July 28. For your convenience any links in

this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window. DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the member submitting them, and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

- **From Keith KB8FE #1542 -** I have had a Bencher BY-1 two paddle key (black base) which has remained idle for about 15 years now. I have always had trouble handling two separate paddles, especially since I use the 'bug mode' on the keyer. I have always liked the look and the feel of the Bencher. Recently I made an attachment that can be installed and removed easily and allows me to manipulate the two separate paddles with one (single arm) paddle and it works extremely well, surpassing my expectations.

So now I tend to use the Bencher BY-1 key more than any of the other keys I own. One advantage over the 'true bug' is that the electronic keyer in 'bug mode' has self-completing dots and now I do not have to take my much beloved Vibroplex 'Original' out into the 'boonies' when operating outdoors. If you have a similar situation with a Bencher BY-1, BY-2, BY-3 or BY-4 sitting idle because you cannot deal with the two separate paddles easily, you might consider pulling it out and making it into a single paddle actuated key with a simple attachment. The attachment does not modify the key in any permanent way so the resale value of the Bencher will remain unchanged. Below is a picture with some comments.

Parts marked with yellow circles were added by me.
A single arm now actuates the original two paddles.
The overall length of the converter is 8 inches. Shorten as desired.
There is no pressure on the original paddles when the arm is at rest.
I use a K1EL keyer in the 'bug mode' but any non-iambic use works.
BENCHER
July 1, 2011

The updated image shows a shorter, wooden dowel arm which is lighter and less expensive than a brass arm and which provides a little more 'flex'. Also it shows a small wooden paddle at the end of the arm. There is also a thin plastic washer under the front pivot which I believe did not make any notable difference to the freedom of movement so I consider this an unnecessary change but I have left it on anyway.

Please visit my QRZ web page for more! http://www.qrz.com/db/kb8fe

- **From Art K6XT #1342 -** Why log in UTC?

I had occasion in the most recent mW sprint to reflect on logging in universal time. My

correspondent, a station back east, had the time wrong. In this case it was simply a clerical error. But it did get me to thinking. Not everyone in NAQCC has a reason to think in UTC like I do. With over 20 years of Navy duty plus lots of contest and DX activity I actually think in UTC and the 24-hour clock, much to the dismay of my XYL W0MOE who has no such training. To her, 1635 is someone's house number.

So why log in UTC? Simply because it puts all logs worldwide on the same time. 0030Z is the same time in Colorado as it is in Belarus, or Florida, or California. If a QSO is logged in UTC then it follows that uploads to LoTW, EQSL, ClubLog, etc. will match up exactly in time.

Imagine the confusion if nobody logged in UTC. Take LoTW. How could LoTW match uploaded QSO files from P5RS7 and K6XT, if the QSO times are local? P5 is an entire half day different in time. A whole day different in date, at least part of the time, than Colorado. Then it becomes imperative that logs are kept in some kind of standard time.

The standard is UTC, ex-GMT for Greenwich Mean Time, considered the same as CUT for Coordinated Universal Time, and popularized as Z for Zulu time. I'll use Z. Long ago, Z was standardized as the time at the prime meridian, which passes thru Greenwich England, thus GMT for Greenwich Mean Time. GMT was established in 1884 at the International Meridian Conference, when it was decided to place the Prime Meridian at Greenwich. This may have had something to do with the supposition that England was the current world Navy powerhouse at the time. As one could imagine, there is plenty more to confuse the unwary, for example at Wikipedia. We QSO loggers need not be confused. Listen to WWV and set your clocks accordingly.

Most of the logging programs I am aware of are equipped to translate local computer time to Z time. The user just enters the local time zone offset and notes if daylight savings time is employed locally. The program does the rest. Some purists prefer to actually set their computer clock to Z, then instruct the logger that the offset is zero. Whichever method is chosen, the important thing is that all logged QSOs are in Z.

- **From David KC9EHQ # 1489 -** As many of us QRPer's do some kit building, I am writing this article to see if I can get some technical help. I am an experienced kit builder and my recent build was a Norcal 40A from Wilderness Radio. I also got the BuzzNot noise blanker and the KC1 keyer/counter. The Norcal 40A works and is aligned as well as I can get it using my QRO rig. I will probably borrow some test equipment from some friends later and get it tightened up with receive and transmit. I have not installed the noise blanker yet.

The issues I am having center around the keyer/counter option I bought, the KC1. I think I have it all wired up correctly, but I am having the following issues:

* The RF gain has to be set to minimum, as the side tone overdrives the headphones if you increase the RF gain
* There is a noticeable thumping sound in my headphones during the transition from transmit to receive
* When either of the buttons on the KC1 are pressed, a pulse sound in CW is heard, but no side tone
* When I key the radio with the keyer, and listen to my transmitted signal, the side tone starts low and then goes up to the usual 600 Hz that I use. It sounds like a pigeon!

I have done NO major modifications to the rig itself EXCEPT replace the original 1-turn pot with a 10-turn pot for the VFO. With that, I have noticed that I get a wider tunable range and smoother tuning.

If anyone owns a Norcal 40A AND has the KC1 keyer/counter installed, and can provide some troubleshooting help, please contact me at kc9ehq@arrl.net. We could then possibly exchange phone numbers and hopefully solve this problem in a phone call or two. Thanks!!!

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** Not a lot of news this time. You already know about our portable operation from the story in the main news section of this newsletter. Otherwise the bands continue about as they have been. Pretty good for DXing, although not as good as they were in April when the average SF for the month was over 100. Lately it's been kind of in the doldrums in the 80-90 range. Still even with that it's possible to work DX each and every day. My DX streak continues at 106 days as of July 10. Getting a mW QSO has been a bit rough on a few days here and there, but that streak is over 430 days now.

Club email address - **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.